

Minutes of the Judiciary and Law Enforcement Committee – September 26, 2008

Chair Bonnie Morris called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

Committee Members Present: County Board Supervisors Bonnie Morris (Chair), Kathleen Cummings, Dave Falstad, James Behrend, John Pledl (arrived at 8:36 a.m.), and Jean Tortomasi.

Absent: Peter Wolff.

Also Present: Legislative Policy Advisor Dave Krahn, Legislative Associate Karen Phillips, Medical Examiner Dr. Lynda Biedrzycki, Senior Financial Analyst Lyndsay Johnson, and Buildings Operations Manager Mark Keckeisen.

Future Meeting Dates

- October 3, 2008

Legislative Update

Krahn provided an update on the proposed 9-1-1 legislation to be introduced in the next session of the legislature.

Pledl arrived at 8:36

Future Agenda Items

Cummings suggested a review of the Huber Study done in the early 2000's would be beneficial for the new supervisors in relation to the tour today and the future of the campus.

Report by Committee Member Liaisons

Morris stated that she was recently appointed to work on a PPAC (Policy and Planning Advisory Committee to the Wisconsin Supreme Court) Subcommittee for Effective Justice Policy Planning, and will attend her first meeting in November.

Morris attended the CJCC meeting on September 24, 2008, and summarized the items discussed:

- Introduction of the new CJCC Coordinator, Rebecca Turner.
- Marcia Jante announced the receipt of the federal grant for the Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program for Youth in the amount of \$125,000 per year for ten years.

Discuss and Consider the 2009 Medical Examiner Operating Budget

Position Changes

Biedrzycki announced that Dr. Brian Peterson has resigned and accepted the position of Deputy Chief Medical Examiner with the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office beginning September 29, 2008. Recruitment has been initiated to fill the pathologist position.

Performance Measures

Biedrzycki explained the ME's goal to investigate 35-40% of all deaths in the county; 38% were investigated in 2007.

Two performance measures were added by the Department of Administration:

- Implement a more reliable and robust case management system – Biedrzycki stated their current Access database was house crafted by Rob Dunn in 1999. The system is becoming fragmented and difficult to manage. They have been working with IT looking at different products. They found a web-based company with a system that can be accessed offsite, with

the ability to provide enhanced communication with other agencies. Cost savings will be achieved through staff efficiencies with a new system. Morris asked if enough money is budgeted for this project. Biedrzycki stated she did not budget for it, but this project was fast tracked in 2008 because their system was failing. She stated there should be enough money in the operating budget to cover it.

- Continue to provide contract autopsy coverage to other counties – Biedrzycki stated the revenue from the contract autopsy coverage provides revenue to cover some of their costs, mainly personnel costs of a second pathologist. They continue to work with Racine and Washington Counties, and Walworth County is now considering contract coverage for some of their cases.

Budget Overview

Biedrzycki stated the total budget increase is \$53,151; less of half it is tax levy and the rest is revenue increases.

- Expenditures: Biedrzycki explained a large part of the budget increase is due to interdepartmental charges for end-user technology charges and fuel costs. She explained the other increases are due to operating and personnel costs to continue
- Revenues: Biedrzycki explained ways in which the Medical Examiner's Office is trying to generate more revenue: the cremation fee will rise from \$165.00 to \$185.00; elimination of the fee waiver for Title 19 and medical college donations; increase in tissue agency contracts by \$100 a month (to \$2100 per month); increase morgue use fee by \$5 per day (to \$35 per day), and increase in expert fee by \$25 per hour (\$350).

Biedrzycki further explained the justification for not waiving fees for Title 19 recipients and medical college donations. Morris asked how many cases fall into those categories. Biedrzycki estimated that the total would be about \$10,000 in additional revenue. Cummings stated she understood about the medical college, because that is a business, but expressed her concern about the Title 19 cases. Biedrzycki said that the State provides \$3,000 in funds for funeral expenses to Title 19 cases, and the Medical Examiner fees could be paid with some of those monies.

Activity

Biedrzycki reviewed a statistical chart of Medical Examiner's case activity. She stated that although the total cases and number of scenes are up, the total exams and autopsies are down (based on the first 3 quarters of 2008). She stated that Racine County cases are up compared to last year, and Washington County cases are down. Discussion continued regarding some of the other types of cases as listed on the statistical chart.

Approval of Capital Projects in the Proposed 2009-2013 Plan for which the Committee has Budget and Policy Oversight

Morris reviewed the proposed recommendation, which she will take to the Executive Committee, to move the Courthouse study up, with half of the expenditure to be spent in 2009 and the other half in 2010. She stated she would probably recommend that fund balance be used rather than raising the levy.

Krahn informed the Committee that the Executive Committee pulled Items 1, 2,3,6,21,33,36 and 37 for further discussion on October 6, 2008.

MOTION: Tortomasi moved, second by Cummings, to approve the Capital Projects in the 2009-2013 Capital Projects Plan for which this Committee has oversight, including the referral to the Executive Committee for the Courthouse Study. Motion carried: 6-0.

Tortomasi left at approximately 9:35 a.m.

Tour of the Huber Facility

The Committee members traveled to the Huber Facility for the tour.

MOTION: Cummings moved, second by Falstad, to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m. Motion carried: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen M. Cummings
Secretary